CRADLED IN THE ROCKING BOAT
Ralph McTell

Cradled in the rocking boat
Curly-headed in his cot
Swayed to his mother's dreams
Of what might be and what shall not
But the baby becomes a child
See how the child has grown
Away from the schemes of others
To the wild dreams of his own.

Come down to the park
It's a very dangerous place
There are cowboys and Indians everywhere
And creatures from outer space
Where every tree is an alien
And every tree is a friend
Oh come down to the park
And watch a childhood end.

Oh come down to the park
Swings and roundabouts
The sun's a pink saucer over the trees
Girlish shrieks and boyish shouts
In these streets after dark
Cheeks burning not from the chase
They will steal your boyhood away
It's a very dangerous place.

So the boy becomes the man
Cigarettes and drinking beer
Now he longs to be homesick
Instead of tired of staying here.
But beware of the look of the lake
It's really an estuary
Fear the pull of the tide.
For beyond is the open sea.